

# STRATO LASER

S T R A T O L A S E R

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PROGRAMMA

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DESCRIPTION

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## STRATOLASER

You are the commander of a remote outpost at the edges of the galactic frontier. Your duty is to sweep the quadrant under your command for invading alien starships from the Klunkon empire.

Since the Klunkon warships are hidden by protective shields you must locate them by using laser probes and deduction. Figure 1 shows that the quadrant display screen is a 10 by 10 grid surrounded by 40 laser probe tubes, numbered 1 to 40. In order to fire a laser probe, you enter a number from 1 to 40 while in command mode. Probes move in the same manner as castles in the game of chess (i.e. vertically and horizontally). Probes 1 to 10 begin by moving southward, 11 to 20 move westward, etc. If a probe encounters no opposition it will continue in a straight line and exit at the opposite probe tube. Thus a probe fired from tube 2 would exit at probe tube 29 and vice versa.

If there is a Klunkon in the square ahead of a probe, the probe is absorbed by the Klunkon's protective shield and the number of the probe's origin will be replaced by an exclamation point to indicate this shocking result!

If the path of a probe takes it along a row or column next to a klunkon the probe will be deflected 90 degrees from the Klunkon



when the probe and the Klunkon are diagonally adjacent. After turning, the probe will continue in its new direction until exiting, being absorbed, or deflecting off still another Klunkon. Note that two Klunkons on the same row or column with one space between them will cause a probe that attempts to pass between them to make two 90 degree turns and thus reverse its direction. If a probe returns to the same tube from which it was fired from, the tubes number will be replaced by an asterisk (\*).

If a probe encounters a Klunkon at a perimeter square before having had a chance to fully exit its firing tube, one of two things may happen: 1) The Klunkon is directly ahead so the probe is absorbed as usual. 2) The Klunkon is off to one side and the probe has no row or column to use as its deflected path. It will be REflected instead of being DEflected.

Probes that are neither reflected, deflected or absorbed must exit someplace and to help you keep track, the entry and exit numbers will be replaced by a letter indicating which turn it was (A thru Z).



The following refers to figure two and describes what happens to a probe fired from each of the 40 tubes.

1. Absorbed by K3
2. Deflected by K1
3. Absorbed by K2
4. Absorbed by K2
5. Deflected by K2
6. Absorbed by K2 (Via K5 & K4)
7. Absorbed by K5
8. Exits at 13 (Via K5)
9. Exits at 22
10. Exits at 21
11. Absorbed by K2
12. Absorbed by K6 (Via K2)
13. Exits at 8 (Via K5)
14. Absorbed by K5
15. Exits at 23 (Via K5)
16. Exits at 35
17. Exits at 34
18. Exits at 33
19. Exits at 32! (Via K6, K5, K4, K6)
20. Absorbed by K6
21. Exits at 10
22. Exits at 9
23. Exits at 15 (Via K5)
24. Absorbed by K5
25. Deflected by K6
26. Absorbed by K6
27. Deflected by K6
28. Absorbed by K4
29. Deflected by K3, K4
30. Absorbed by K3
31. Absorbed by K6
32. Exits at 19 (Via K6, K4, K5, K6)
33. Exits at 18
34. Exits at 17
35. Exits at 16
36. Deflected by K3
37. Absorbed by K3
38. Deflected by K3
39. Deflected by K1, K4, K3, K1
40. Absorbed by K1

Now that you know how to find them, you must learn how to blow the Klunkons out of the space-time continuum.

When you think you know where one of the Klunkons is lurking, you may mark him with a buoy containing an antimatter bomb. You will notice that instead of a number, you may enter a command that gets you into the on-board computer facility. One of these commands is "M" for "Mark".

The computer will ask you for the X-coordinate of the Klunkon. Note that the "X>>" is flashing. This is to alert you to the fact that you must NOT use the laser probe tube numbers when referring to positions WITHIN the quadrant, but rather the standard cartesian coordinate notation (provided along the bottom and right sides). All references to the on board computer are in cartesian terms (X, Y). After the X-coordinate has been entered, the Y-coordinate will be asked for while the  $\hat{y}$  flashes.

After both coordinates have been entered, the computer will ask you to input a marker. Because each sector within the quadrant is two characters wide, two characters will appear at the specified location. However, only the first character input is used as a marker and therefore appears duplicated. The marker may be any character except "-" or a blank.

If you make a mistake (or subsequent events cause you to change your mind) you may remove any non-blank character by calling for the "unmrk" facility.



If you have a particularly difficult set of Klunkons, you may find it helpful to be able to mark where the Klunkons are not --- that is, the areas that are clear of Klunkons. To do this, use the "clear" facility. Most areas known to be clear turn out to be long or wide (for example probe 10 exiting at 21 guarantees that columns 9 and 10 are clear). Therefore, "clear" allows single placement or lets you choose a row or column. After you have entered your choice, you will be asked which row or column and from where to where. "Clear" is just a handy notation and does not guarantee that you are right (although in the example given, columns 9 and 10 are guaranteed). Whether the area is clear or not, "--" will be displayed in all of the designated sectors. Note that clear will not overwrite markers and will just pass them by if tried.

To go back to probing enter "L" for laser.

Once you think you have all of the Klunkons marked (or enough of them), you instruct the computer to fire at them all at once. If you have marked a Klunkon, he will be destroyed by the antimatter device.

You lose 3 points times the square of the number of surviving Klunkons -- their power multiplies in groups! You lose 2 points for each marker that does not destroy a Klunkon due to incompetent bombing. You lose 1 point for each laser probe tube used -- a probe that exits costs 2 points (you must not squander resources!).

Your score is divided into PAR times 100 to produce a rating and so 100 is an average performance (although it may take a few dozen invasions of on-the-job training to produce this average!).

A standard game is 5 Klunkons with a medium level of deviousness in placement (note that in figure 2 probe 19 produces a very deceptive exit at 32). However, you may prefer to start out with 3 or 4 less tricky Klunkons until you become familiar with the rules of movement and the command console.

For a still more difficult game enter "0" for the number of targets and each invasion will have a random number of targets from 1 to 9 -- most often 4, 5, 6, or 7).

If you choose 0 targets, there are two pars: the usual one and one with a bonus if you get them all correct, thereby raising your rating.

The difficulty may be set as high as 9. The difficulty factor does not change the kind of trickiness, but its frequency.

You have a total of 26 turns; a turn consisting of either firing a laser or entering the on board computer system. This is not usually a limitation for the standard game.

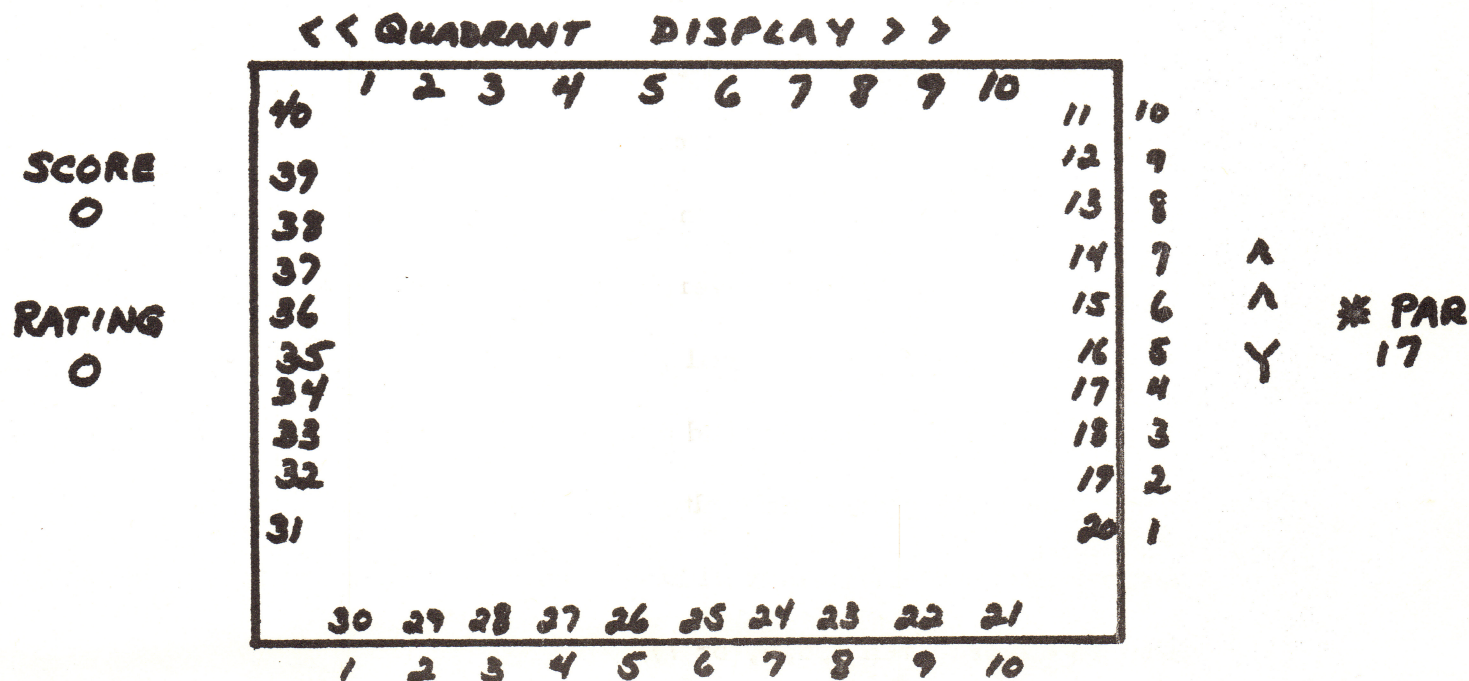
If you would like to play competition answer "R" at the end of each invasion and it can be replayed by as many as 11 other contestants. A separate rating is kept for each player for comparison in this case.

E N J O Y ! !



DFCLTY 5

5 TARGETS

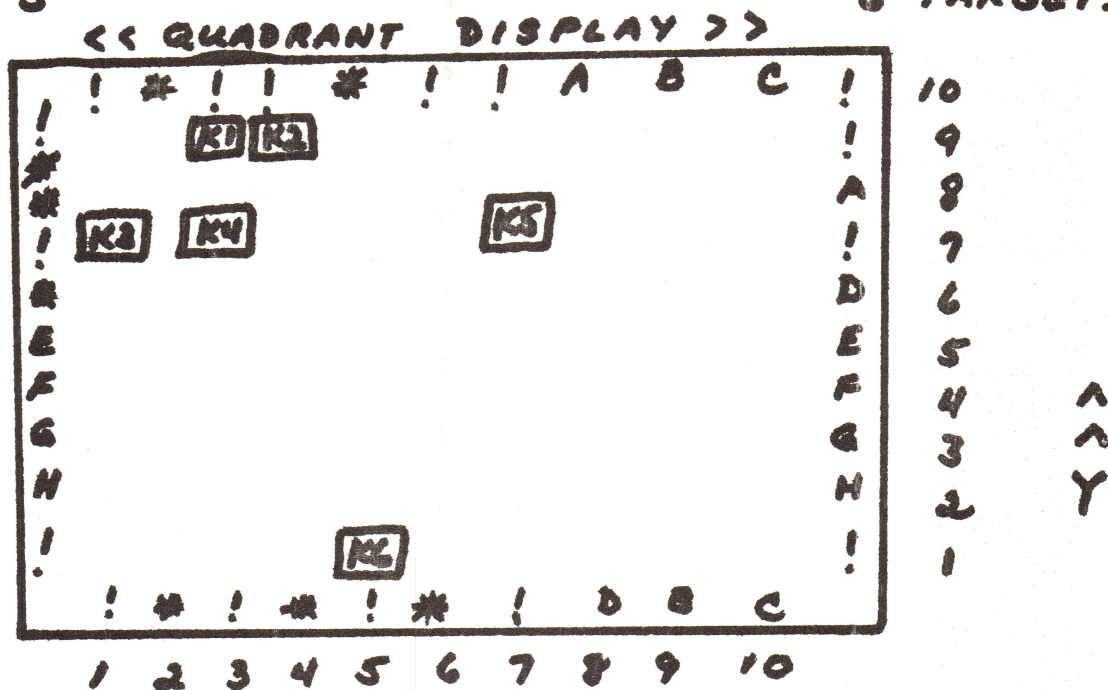


X>>

FIGURE 1... QUADRANT DISPLAY

DFCLTY 5

6 TARGETS



X>>

FIGURE 2... RULES OF MOVEMENT

